

REMARKS

Applicants have cancelled claims 17, 19, 29 and 31 without prejudice.

Applicants have amended claim 15 to more clearly describe the invention. As amended claim 15 incorporates the features of the spray module described by claims 29 and 31, i.e.,

“a spray module in which the spray opening is integrated and which is replaceably inserted in a housing opening of the valve housing” (claim 29)

and

“wherein the spray module includes a lower module plate having a through-hole, and an upper module plate having a through-hole, wherein the through-holes are aligned, and wherein the spray module includes a nozzle body which has the spray opening and is pivotably clamped in the through-holes and between the module plates” (claim 31)

Applicants have amended claims 18, 20 and 30 such that they depend on claims 16, 18, and 15 respectively rather than now cancelled claims 17, 19 and 29.

Claims 15 and 29, 30 and 32-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for purportedly being unpatentable over Zimmer (US Patent No. 6,726,122) in view of Friant (US Patent No. However, for the reasons set forth hereinafter, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims, which remain of record herein, distinguish over the cited references.

The Examiner has indicated claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Former claim 31 depends on former claim 29, which in turn depends on claim 15. Applicants have amended claim 15 to incorporate the features of claims 29 and 31. As amended the washing device of claim 15 now includes a washing fluid nozzle that comprises “a spray module in which the spray opening is integrated and which is replaceably inserted in a housing opening of the valve housing” (claimed in former claim 29) and “wherein the spray module includes a lower module plate having a through-hole, and an upper module plate having a through-hole, wherein the through-holes are aligned, and wherein the spray module includes a nozzle body which has the spray opening and is pivotably clamped in the through-holes and between the module plates” (claimed in former claim 31). Zimmer, alone or in combination with Friant, fails to teach or suggest a washing device comprising such a spray module and therefore fails to render Applicants’ claims obvious.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments to the claims, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Zimmer and Friant.

Claims 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for purportedly being unpatentable over Zimmer in view of Friant and further in view of Bains. However, for the reasons set forth hereinafter, Applicants respectfully submit

that all claims, which remain of record herein, distinguish over the cited references.

As discussed above, Applicants have amended claim 15 to include the spray module described by former claims 29 and 31, which are not encompassed by this rejection. Zimmer and Friant fail to teach or suggest the washing device of the current claims. Bains also fails to teach or suggest such a spray module and thus the combination of these three references fails to render the claimed invention obvious.

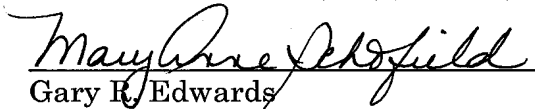
In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments to the claims, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Zimmer, Friant and Bains.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.56145US).

Respectfully submitted,

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